

Message Text

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14

ACTION ARA-20

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R 150904Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2365

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMCONSUL CURACAO UNN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCSO

USCINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 5010

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NL, NA, NS, VE, GY, FG

SUBJECT: GON REALM POLICY

REF: STATE 217552 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: DURING DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR, MINISTER OF REALM AFFAIRS DE GAAY FORTMAN REITERATED GON'S BELIEF IN (A) INDEPENDENCE FOR SURINAM AND (B) LIMITED FORM OF INDEPENDENCE FOR DUTCH ANTILLES WITH GON CONTINUING TO PROVIDE EXTERNAL DEFENSE, WHILE ANTILLES ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNAL ORDER. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING CALL BY AMBASSADOR NOVEMBER 12, MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND REALM AFFAIRS, PROFESSOR DE GAAY FORTMAN, PROVIDED EXPOSITION OF GON'S CURRENT THINKING ON REALM AFFAIRS. MINISTER BEGAN BY POINTING OUT THAT FEELING WITHIN NETHERLANDS ON INDEPENDENCE FOR SURINAM AND ANTILLES IS SOMEWHAT DIVIDED. LABOR PARTY WISHES TO
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CUT CONSTITUTIONAL TIES ASAP. MINISTER DE GAAY FORTMAN,

HOWEVER, FEELS SEPARATION PROCESS MUST BE CAREFUL AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT PROBLEM OF EXTERNAL DEFENSE OF TWO AREAS. HE SAID EXTERNAL DEFENSE IS NOT SO GREAT A PROBLEM FOR SURINAM AS FOR THE ANTILLES, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THERE ARE FRONTIER DISPUTES BETWEEN SURINAM AND GUYANA AND FRENCH GUIANA. PROF. DE GAAY FORTMAN SAID GON EXPECTS TO WORK OUT A SETTLEMENT WITH FRENCH ON FRENCH GUIANA BOUNDARY SINCE FRENCH HAVE ASKED TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS (FY: MFA INFORMED POLCOUNS BOUNDARY ISSUE WAS RAISED IN VAN DER STOEL'S NOVEMBER 12 BILATERAL WITH JOBERT. END FYI). MINISTER SAID GUYANA BORDER DISPUTE, WHICH IS BEING MEDIATED BY TRINIDAD PM WILLIAMS, IS MORE SERIOUS IN VIEW STRONG FEELINGS ON BOTH SIDES. DESPITE THESE BOUNDARY PROBLEMS, MINISTER BELIEVES THAT SURINAM, WHICH HAS "ATTRIBUTES OF A NATION," WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE ITS OWN FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

3. MINISTER SAID NETHERLANDS ANTILLES HAS FEW, IF ANY, ATTRIBUTES F A NATION AND IS INCAPABLE OF MANAGING ITS OWN DEFENSE. MOREOVER, THERE ARE NO REAL PROSPECTS FOR NATION-BUILDING BECAUSE OF THE ISLANDS' GEOGRAPHY, DISPARATE CULTURAL MAKEUP AND MENTALITY OF ANTILLEANS WHO THINK PRIMARILY IN TERMS OF LOYALTY TO THEIR OWN ISLAND. THUS THE MINISTER LOOKS TOWARD SOME SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NETHERLANDS FOR THE ANTILLES. IN ORDER NOT TO UPSET MILITARY BALANCE IN THE CARIBBEAN, HE WILL RECOMMEND THAT GON CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN ITS NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE ANTILLES, BUT NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN INTERNAL MATTERS. TO HANDLE INTERNAL MATTERS, DE GAAY FORTMAN BELIEVES THE ISLANDS MUST DEVELOP RELIABLE POLICE FORCE.

4. ADVERTING TO VENEZUELAN INTEREST IN ANTILLES, MINISTER DE GAAY FORTMAN SAID HE BELIEVED THE DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT HE ENVISIONED WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE VENEZUELAN BECAUSE THE DUTCH WERE IN THIS AREA LONG BEFORE VENEZUELA WAS INDEPENDENT. MOREOVER, CARACAS REALIZES THE ANTILLES ARE UNLIKELY TO EVER HAVE

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THE CAPABILITY TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. DE GAAY FORTMAN FELT THE DUTCH WOULD ACCEPT THIS KIND OF SOLUTION EVEN THOUGH HE RECOGNIZED A GENERAL DESIRE TO MOVE OUT OF AREA BECAUSE OF DUTCH DISINCLINATION TO PLAY POLICEMAN IN THE EVENT OF INTERNAL DISPUTES.

5. COMMENT: DE GAAY FORTMAN, WHO HAS HAD LONG EXPERIENCE WITH THE REALM (HE SERVED AS CHAIRMAN OF

THE REALM COMMISSION PRIOR TO HIS APPOINTMENT AS
MINISTER) IS PROBABLY THE FIRST SPECIALIST TO HANDLE
REALM AFFAIRS IN THE CABINET IN RECENT YEARS. THE MODERATE
AND RESPONSIBLE STANDPOINT HE SKETCHED OUT FOR AMBASSADOR
APPEARS TO BE ALONG THE LINES CONTEMPLATED BY USG AND
STATED RECENTLY IN PARA 2 STATE 217552. WHETHER THIS POINT OF
VIEW WILL PREVAIL IN LABOR-DOMINATED CABINET, HOWEVER,
IS A QUESTION WHOSE ANSWER WILL PROBABLY NOT BECOME
CLEAR UNTIL REALM COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT,
DUE FOR PUBLICATION IN MID-1974 BUT
PROBABLY DELAYED BECAUSE OF IMMINENT SURINAM ELECTIONS
AND INABILITY OF NETHERLANDS ANTILLES TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT
GOULD

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